

Message Text

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11

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 OMB-01 AID-20 IO-13 ACDA-19 GAC-01 RSR-01

/157 W

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R 311435 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2505

INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY DACCA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 3783

E. O. 11652: OLGDS

TAGS: PFOR, PK, IR

SUBJECT: VISIT TO IRAN OF PAKISTANI GENERAL TIKKA KHAN

REF: KABUL 3905

SUMMARY: AS FAR AS EMBASSY CAN DETERMINE, WEIGHT OF EVIDENCE IS THAT GENERAL TIKKA KHAN WAS NOT WORKING OUT A MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND IRAN DURING TIKKA' S JUST CONCLUDED VISIT TO IRAN. END SUMMARY.

1. ONE INTRIGUING ASPECT OF WEEK- LONG VISIT TO IRAN BY PAKISTANI ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF GENERAL TIKKA KHAN, WHICH ENDED ON MAY 31, IS THAT AFTER VISIT WAS ONCE ANNOUNCED IN PRESS DAY OR SO BEFORE TIKKA' S ACTUAL ARRIVAL IN TEHRAN, NOTHING FURTHER ABOUT IT APPEARED IN NEWSPAPERS. THIS SOMEWHAT UNUSUAL PROCEDURE PLUS TIMING OF VISIT SO CLOSE ON HEELS OF PRESIDENT BHUTTO' S VISIT TO THIS COUNTRY STIRRED SPECULATION ESPECIALLY IN DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY THAT GENERAL TIKKA MAY HAVE COME HERE
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FOR PURPOSE OF SIGNING DEFENSE TREATY WITH IRAN. MARGINAL SUPPORT FOR THIS IDEA WAS PROVIDED TO USDAO BY IRANIAN J-5 (PLANS, PROGRAMS, PACTS AND TREATIES) CHIEF MAJOR GENERAL BAKHSHAIZAR WHO FIRST SAID AN AGREEMENT WITH PAKISTAN WOULD BE SIGNED JUNE 2. LATER, HOWEVER, PAKHSHAIZAR BACKTRACKED SAYING THAT NOTHING WAS TO BE SIGNED.

2. ARMISH- MAAG SOURCES HAVE PICKED UP NOTHING MORE THAN THAT GENERAL TIKKA SEEKS FROM IRANIANS THE UPGRADING OR RETROFITTING OF PAKISTANI M-47 TANKS AT IRAN' S TANK UPGRADING FACILITY AT MASJED- E- SOLEYMAN. WHETHER THIS IS TO INVOLVE SUBSTITUTING DIESEL FOR GASOLINE ENGINES ONLY OR IS TO INCLUDE INSTALLATION OF LARGE CALIBER GUNS IS NOT CLEAR. IF TIKKA' S VISIT IN FACT INVOLVED M-47 TANKS ONLY, IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT THIS WOULD BE THE SUBJECT OF ANY WRITTEN TREATY.

3. PAKISTAN EMBASSY DCM MOHAMMAD KHAISHGI TELLS US THAT NO DEFENSE TREATY OR PACT WAS DISCUSSED BY TIKKA. RATHER, VISIT WAS OF A MORE OR LESS ROUTINE NATURE. THERE HAD BEEN A CONTINUING SERIES OF VISITS TO IRAN BY THE HEADS OF PAKISTAN' S THREE ARMED SERVICES SINCE PAKISTAN WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1947. LAST SUCH VISIT TO IRAN BEFORE TIKKA WAS THAT SIX MONTHS AGO OF PAKISTAN NAVAL CHIEF.

4. KHAISHGHI SAID THAT GENERAL TIKKA HAD TAKEN OVER AS CHIEF OF THE PAKISTAN ARMY STAFF FIFTEEN MONTHS AGO AND WAS SOMEWHAT BELATEDLY PAYING HIS FIRST VISIT TO IRAN. HE WAS THE GUEST IN IRAN OF GENERAL GHOLAM ALI OVEISI, COMMANDER OF THE IRANIAN GROUND FORCES. TIKKA AND OVEISI HAD VISITED MILITARY INSTALLATIONS IN MESHED, AHWAZ, ISPAHAN, SHIRAZ AND TEHRAN. KHAISHGI' S EXPLANATION OF NEWSPAPER SILENCE ABOUT TIKKA PRESENCE IN IRAN WAS THAT SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS DICTATED THIS.

COMMENT: THERE MAY BE MORE TO THE TIKKA VISIT THAN NOW APPEARS LIKELY. WE SHALL IN ANY CASE CONTINUE LOOKING AND REPORT OUR FINDINGS.
HELMS

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